



aspen
comics

BLACK & WHITE
ENTERTAINMENT

ONE-SHOT

#1

COVER A

David WOHL
Vince HERNANDEZ
Giuseppe CAFARO
Randy GREEN
Mark ROSLAN
Wes HARTMAN
ZEN

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT *iris*

enemies among us



aspencomics.com



aspen
comics

BLACK & WHITE
ENTERTAINMENT

ONE-SHOT

#1

COVER B

David WOHL
Vince HERNANDEZ
Giuseppe CAFARO
Randy GREEN
Mark ROSLAN
Wes HARTMAN
ZEN

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT Iris

enemies among us



PART ONE
"FIRST ASSIGNMENT"

I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER MY FIRST IMPRESSION OF HIM. HOW HE SMELLED OF STALE CIGARETTES AND AIR FRESHENER.



ONE MOMENT I WAS A SENIOR STUDENT AT THE ACADEMY, AND THE NEXT...

I WAS IN THE EMPLOY OF THIS MAN.

AND THERE WERE NO CLASSES IN LIMO ETIQUETTE.

YOU NEED TO GET IN AND SIT ACROSS FROM HIM, QUICKLY!*

*EDITOR'S NOTE: TRANSLATED FROM CHINESE.

IRIS. SUCH A PRETTY NAME...

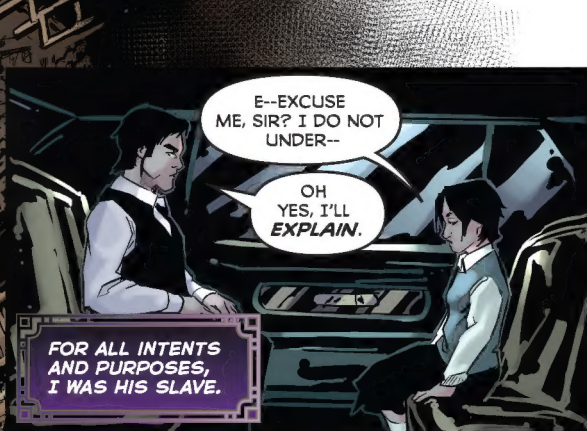
...FOR SUCH A PRETTY GIRL.





I WAS LEAVING THE ONLY PLACE I HAD EVER LIVED, WITH A MAN I DID NOT KNOW.

I BELIEVE YOU'RE *JUST* THE RIGHT SIZE.



E--EXCUSE ME, SIR? I DO NOT UNDER--

OH YES, I'LL EXPLAIN.

FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES, I WAS HIS SLAVE.



YOU ARE **ACCOMPANYING** ME TO AN EVENT THIS EVENING...

FOR HIM TO DO WITH AS HE PLEASED...



...AND YOU MUST WEAR **APPROPRIATE** ATTIRE.

THANK YOU, SIR,

FOREVER.



OH--ONE MORE THING, IRIS.

OR PERHAPS MERELY UNTIL HE GREW BORED WITH ME.

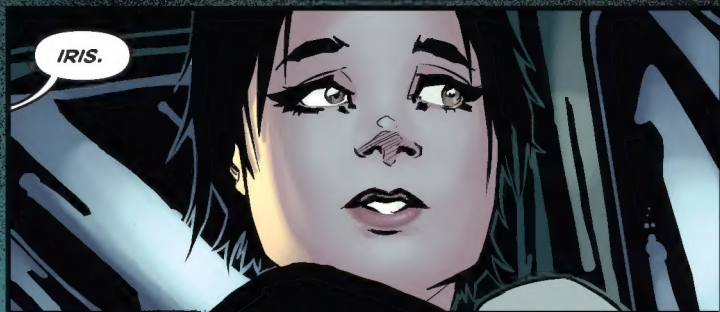


YOU WILL **NEED THIS** AS WELL.

BUT REGARDLESS OF THE FUTURE, ONE THING WAS EMINENTLY CLEAR...



I WOULD NOT BE RETURNING HOME ANY TIME SOON.



I--I AM SORRY, SIR.



I ADMIT NOW HOW DIFFICULT IT WAS TO JUST SIT AND STARE AT MY FEET WHILE ALL AROUND ME WERE WINDOWS REVEALING THE WORLD I HAD NEVER SEEN.



NOT *THAT* COLOR.

I *DON'T* WANT HER LOOKING LIKE A HARLOT.

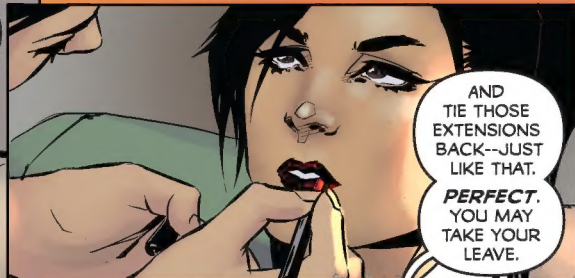
BUT I HAD NO INTENTION OF FEELING MY NEW EMPLOYER'S CANE AGAIN IF I COULD HELP IT.

MY APOLOGIES.

IS THIS *MORE* TO YOUR LIKING, SIR?

OF COURSE, SIR.

YES. *YES*. JUST PUT IT ON.



AND TIE THOSE EXTENSIONS BACK--JUST LIKE THAT. *PERFECT*. YOU MAY TAKE YOUR LEAVE.

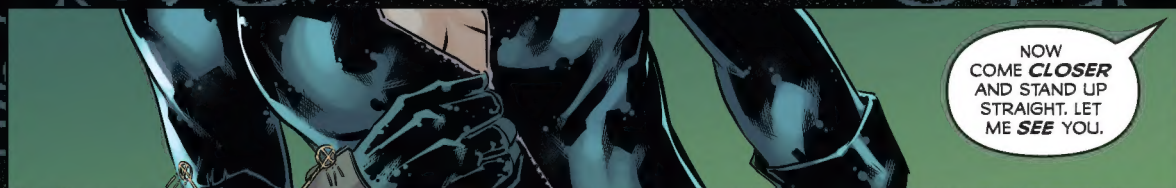
PUT IT ON.

EXCUSE ME, SIR, I'LL *JUST BE A WOMEN--*.

NO. *HERE*.

YES. JUST LIKE THAT.

YOU ARE A SPECIAL ONE, IRIS.



NOW
COME **CLOSER**
AND STAND UP
STRAIGHT. LET
ME **SEE** YOU.



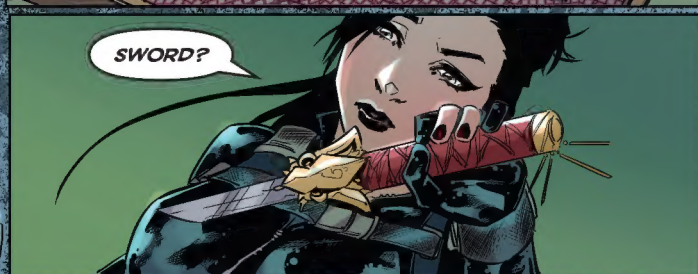
EXQUISITE. A
PERFECT FIT.

NOW,
THE **BOX**,
IRIS.



MY **FIRST**
GIFTS TO
YOU, IRIS.

TAKE THE
SWORD.



SWORD?



OH.

CLICK



PLEASE REMAIN
IN YOUR SEATS FOR
THE REMAINDER OF THE
FLIGHT AS WE BEGIN
OUR DESCENT INTO
HONG KONG.



ONE HOUR LATER.

NOW,
YOU **MUST**
LISTEN,
IRIS.

YOU WILL BE MEETING
MANY PEOPLE TONIGHT: PARTY
OFFICIALS, CEOs OF CORPORATIONS
BASED AROUND THE WORLD, FOREIGN
DIGNITARIES AND PERHAPS **EVEN**
SOME CELEBRITIES.

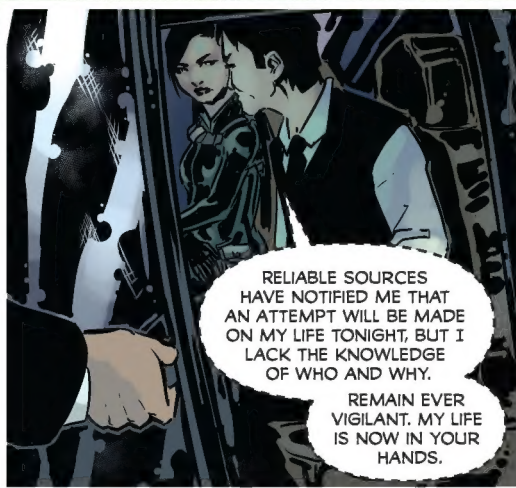
STUDY
THEM, IRIS. **ALL** OF
THEM, NO MATTER HOW
INNOCUOUS **THEY SEEM.** KNOW
THEIR NAMES, THEIR SPOUSE'S
NAMES, THEIR FAVORITE DRINKS,
PERCEIVED WEAKNESSES AND,
MOST IMPORTANTLY,
THEIR Demeanor TOWARD
ME...AND YOU.

YOU'LL **NEVER KNOW**
WHEN YOU MIGHT ENCOUNTER
THEM AGAIN AND UNDER WHAT
CIRCUMSTANCES. TODAY'S
BEST FRIEND MAY STAB YOU
IN THE BACK TOMORROW.

IT IS
THE WAY OF
THINGS.

THIS
NIGHT IS **VERY**
IMPORTANT
TO ME, IRIS.

TO
US.



RELIABLE SOURCES
HAVE NOTIFIED ME THAT
AN ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE
ON MY LIFE TONIGHT, BUT I
LACK THE KNOWLEDGE
OF WHO AND WHY.

REMAIN EVER
VIGILANT. MY LIFE
IS NOW IN YOUR
HANDS.




WELCOME,
MR. CHING.

AND
WHO MIGHT I
ASK IS YOUR
GUEST?

THIS
IS MY--

EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT
IRIS



I MUST ADMIT THAT, AT FIRST, IT WAS A BIT DIFFICULT TO CONTAIN MY SENSE OF WONDER IN THE MIDST OF ALL THE LUXURIOSUSNESS.

NOT EVEN THE THREAT OF MY EMPLOYER'S IRE WAS ENOUGH TO PREVENT ME FROM STARING AT ALL THE OPULENCE.

IRIS.
COME
NOW.

OH
YES.

INDEED,
A WISE
INVESTMENT.
MISTER
CHING.

THANK
YOU, SIR.

YES, I
BELIEVE YOU'LL
GET **AT LEAST**
TWENTY YEARS
OUT OF THIS
ONE.

FORTUNATELY THE ACADEMY TRAINED ME TO EXPECT TO BE TREATED LIKE LIVESTOCK, SO HIS COMMENTS WERE NOT OFFENSIVE TO ME, YET THEY STUNG NONETHELESS.

UNFORTUNATELY, I HAD NO IDEA THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING OF THE NIGHT'S HUMILIATIONS...

THERE
YOU ARE,
CHING!

WITH THE GUNMAN LESS
THAN TEN FEET FROM
MY EMPLOYER, THERE
WAS NO TIME TO THINK.

ONLY
TO ACT.

FORTUNATELY I
POSSESSED MISTER
CHING'S GIFTS.

K-SHNNNK

NO--
YOU
FOOL!

≡ GASP ≡

DON'T!

OH...

YOU WERE
ONE SECOND
AWAY FROM
JOINING HIM.

TH-THANK
YOU...

PAM
PAM

FREE
TIB--

PAM
PAM



I DIDN'T
DO IT FOR YOU
...OR **YOUR**
EMPLOYER.



I JUST
DIDN'T WANT MY
EMPLOYER TO BE KILLED
BECAUSE OF **YOUR**
STUPIDITY.




**PICK UP
YOUR SWORD,
IRIS!**



DON'T
EMBARRASS
ME ANY
FURTHER.

NOW
COME...






AFTER A MOST DISCOMFORTINGLY SILENT SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE RIDE WHERE MY EMPLOYER ONLY DRANK WHISKEY AND ANGRILY STARED OUT THE WINDOW, WE ARRIVED AT THE SHANGHAI SKYSCRAPER THAT WAS ONE OF HIS HOMES...

AT FIRST I THOUGHT THE DARKNESS WAS JUST THERE TO REFLECT HIS MOOD...

...BUT A LACK OF POWER WAS THE CULPRIT.



IRIS, GO DOWNSTAIRS AND TELL THE FRONT DESK THAT I **WILL NOT STAND** FOR THESE IRRITATIONS, STORM OR NO.

YES, SIR... JUST ONE MOMENT...

KEEP LOOKING AT THE WINDOW, SIR.

YOUR POWER WAS CUT.



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING AB--



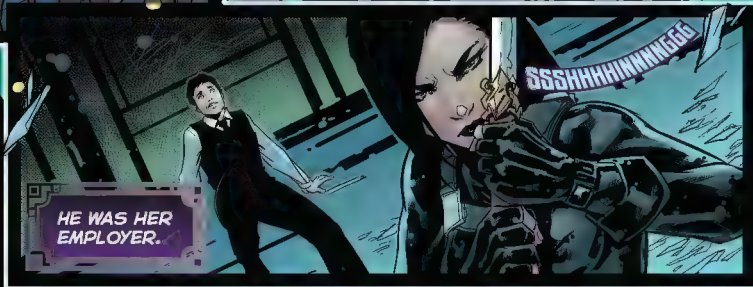
GET DOWN!



DAHLIA...

DAHLIA...

I HAD A FEELING SHE WAS KNOWN TO HIM. THAT FIRE IN HER EYES WAS PERSONAL.



HE WAS HER EMPLOYER.



HELLO
AGAIN, LITTLE
FLOWER.

DO YOU
THINK YOU'LL
FARE BETTER
THIS TIME?

TRY
ME...

WITH
PLEASURE,
GIRL!

DON'T
WORRY. I'LL
MAKE THIS
PAINL--

HATE TO
DISAPPOINT...

THHKKWASSHHH

KKNNNNGGG

HNNGH--
I'LL KILL
YOU...

YOU
CAN
TRY.

AGAIN SHE RUSHES ME. THINKING
I AM ILL-EQUIPPED TO USE MY WEAPON.

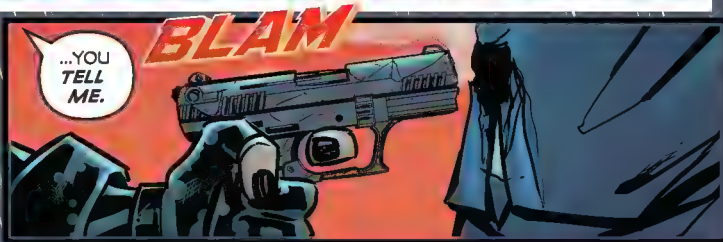


HAAAAAAAAA!

≧HNNHHH≦

DID
YOU LEARN
NOTHING,
LITTLE
FLOWER?

I DON'T
KNOW...



...YOU
TELL
ME.

BLAM



GOOD
NIGHT,
DAHLIA.

I WISH WE HAD MET UNDER
DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES...

...BECAUSE I AM
SURE YOU WOULD
HAVE A LOT TO
TELL ME ABOUT
MY EMPLOYER...

END.

LIMITED
EDITION



aspen
comics

BLOCKADE

DEC 2016

VOL. 1
1

ONE
SHOT

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT *iris* *enemies among us*



PART TWO
"PAIN DROPS"



FOR A BLACK MARKET PROFESSION, THE REPUTE OF A WORLD-CLASS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IS ODDLY ONE OF NOTORIETY IN HUSHED TONES.

I WILL NOT LIE—I ONCE BELIEVED THE PROPAGANDA, PARTICULARLY ABOUT MY OWN LORE, IN MY YOUNGER YEARS.

I MUST SAY...I EXPECTED MORE.

THEY SPEAK OF YOU AS A LEGEND.

AND **THEY** WOULD BE?

...UNTIL I MET HER.

HNNH.

OH, YOU KNOW, WHISPERS IN THE AIR—SUCH AND SUCH. AN EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT NEVER REVEALS HER SOURCES.

THEY ALSO LIKE TO GOSSIP LIKE A BUNCH OF TIRED OLD HOUSEWIVES...**THEY** CALL THEMSELVES EXECUTIVES, BUT ARE MERELY PAWNS IN A LARGER GAME THEY KNOW NOTHING ABOUT, AND ONE THEY WILL SOON BE DROWNED IN.

BESIDES, **YOU** OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW NOT TO LISTEN TO WHISPERS. YOU AND I... WE BOTH SHARE A HIGHER PURPOSE.

IF THAT WERE TRUE WE WOULD NOT BE HERE ON THIS BRIDGE RIGHT NOW. YOU **KNOW** WHAT YOU'VE BEEN DOING ALL ALONG PLAYING ALL SIDES. I JUST WISH **I** DID—IT WOULD SAVE BOTH OF US A LOT OF TIME.

YES.

...SHE WAS
CERTAINLY
DIFFERENT.

--AND YOU'VE
ALREADY DONE YOUR
SWEEPS?*

*[TRANSLATED
FROM ARABIC]

TWO BEFORE
SUNRISE AND
ANOTHER JUST
NOW. THE HOTEL
IS SECURE,
MR. KARIM.

I KNOW YOU MUST
THINK ME OVERCAUTIOUS,
THALIA, BUT AFTER THE PAST
FEW WEEKS WE WILL SPARE
NO EXPENSE ON SECURITY,
NOT AFTER JAKARTA.

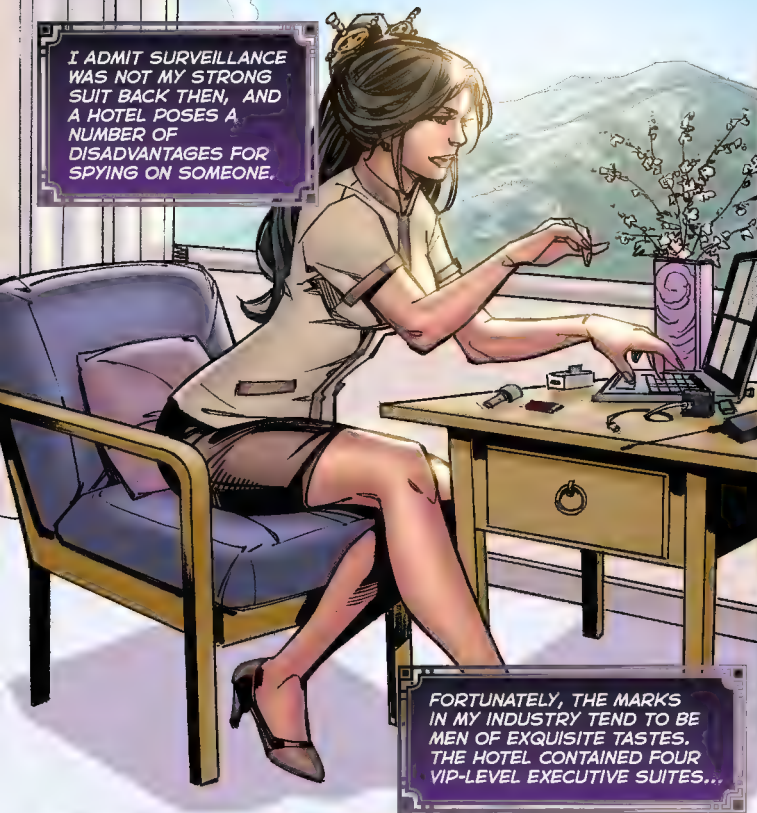
YOU
WILL **NOT BE**
HARMED, SIR, AS
LONG AS I DRAW
BREATH ABOVE
GROUND.

I ADMIT, I WAS INDEED
MUCH MORE BRASH
BACK THEN, AS WELL.

I WAS SO CONFIDENT
THAT MOST TIMES I
HID IN PLAIN SIGHT.

I DIDN'T REALIZE AT THAT
POINT HOW FAR MY
REPUTATION HAD SPREAD.

I SHOULD HAVE
PROCEEDED WITH
MORE CAUTION.



I ADMIT SURVEILLANCE WAS NOT MY STRONG SUIT BACK THEN, AND A HOTEL POSES A NUMBER OF DISADVANTAGES FOR SPYING ON SOMEONE.

FORTUNATELY, THE MARKS IN MY INDUSTRY TEND TO BE MEN OF EXQUISITE TASTES. THE HOTEL CONTAINED FOUR VIP-LEVEL EXECUTIVE SUITES...

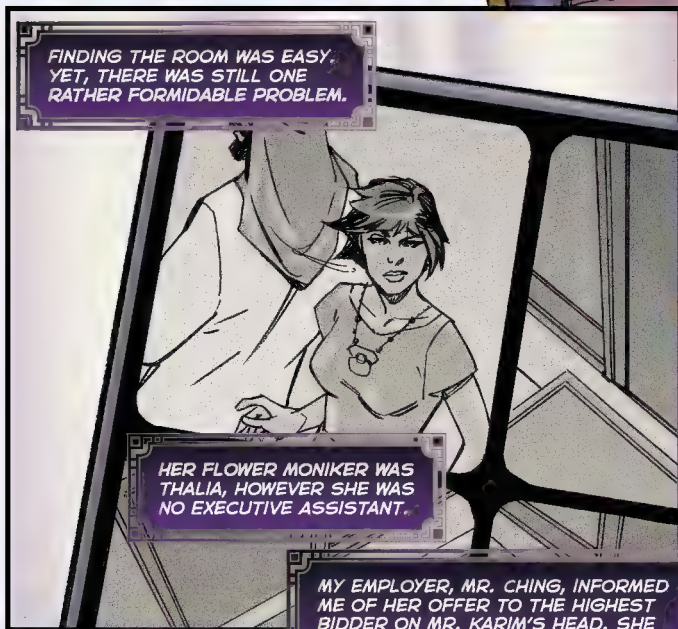


...I BUGGED THEM ALL.

GUESSWORK IS THE BANE TO ANY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT'S LIVELIHOOD.



TWENTY-ONE-FORTY-FIVE.



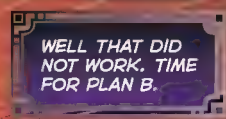
FINDING THE ROOM WAS EASY. YET, THERE WAS STILL ONE RATHER FORMIDABLE PROBLEM.

HER FLOWER MONIKER WAS THALIA, HOWEVER SHE WAS NO EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT.

MY EMPLOYER, MR. CHING, INFORMED ME OF HER OFFER TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER ON MR. KARIM'S HEAD. SHE WAS IN EFFECT-A TRAITOR TO HER OWN MASTER....YET, HE HAD NO CLUE.



I INTENDED TO BE HIS CLUE.



AND ALLOW ME TO DISCLOSE THAT
A FIVE STAR RESTAURANT MAKES
FOR A PERFECT SETTING OF
DANGEROUS WEAPONRY TO UTILIZE.

HRAGH!

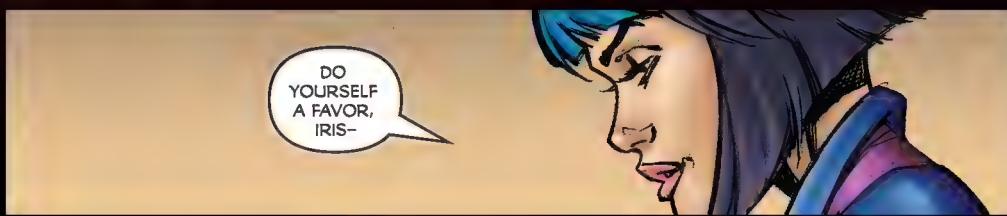
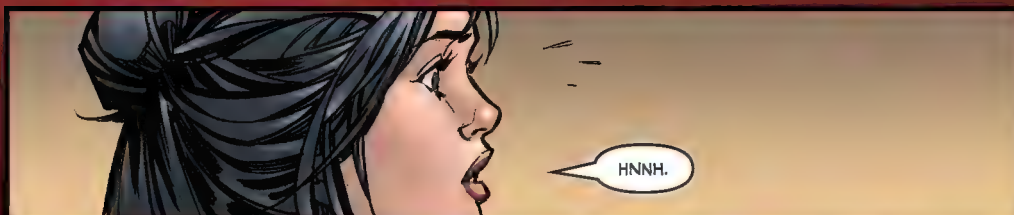
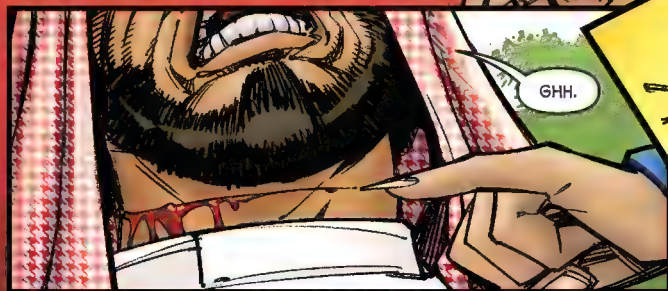
I JUST NEEDED TO GET
CLOSE ENOUGH TO WARN
HIM BUT, AT THAT POINT--

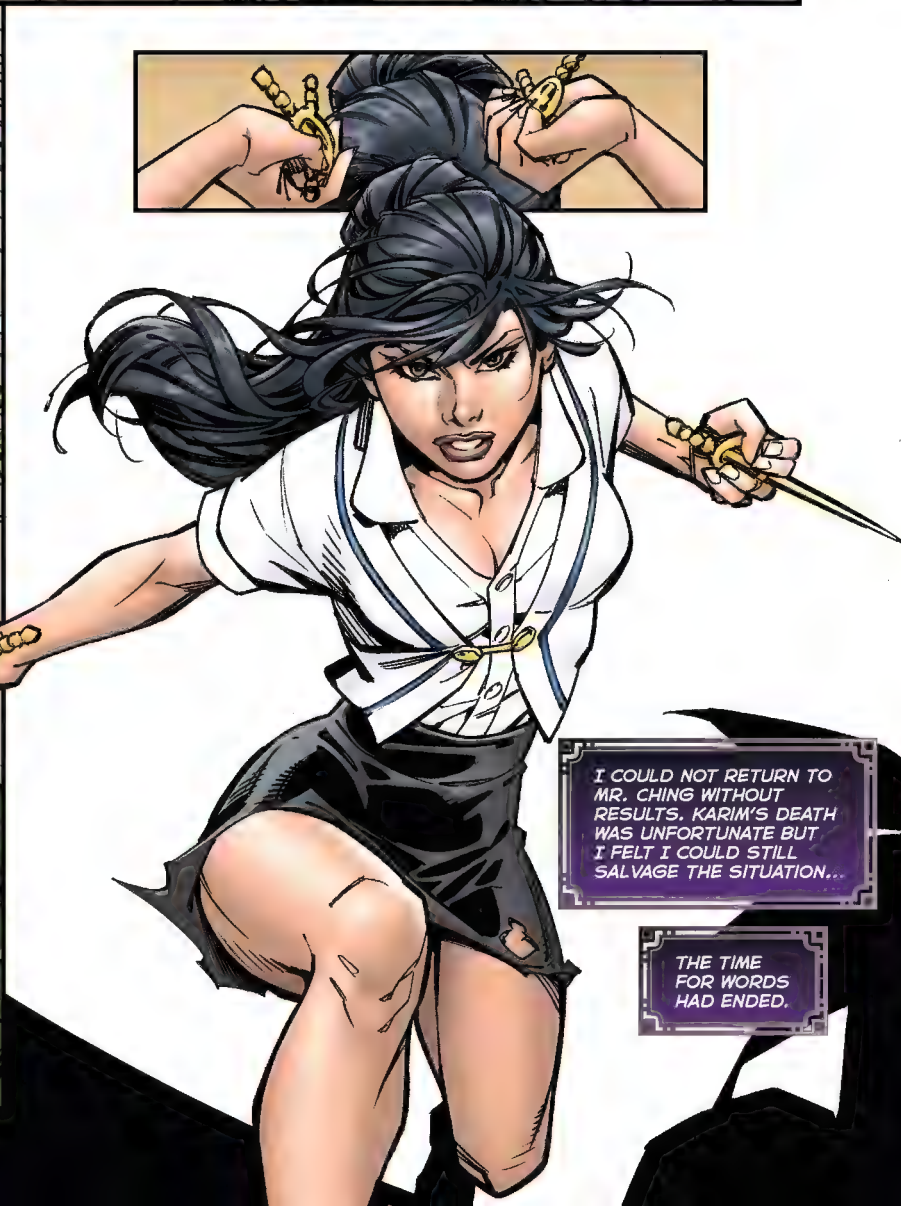
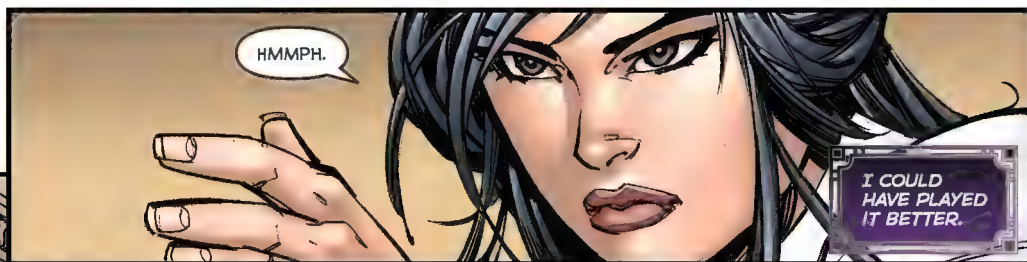
HNNGH!

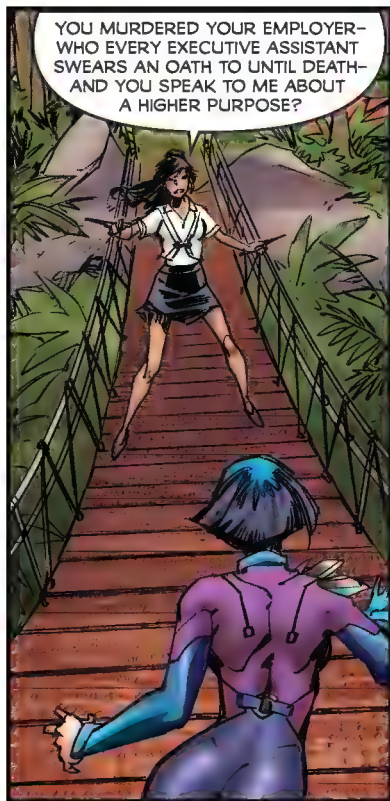
GRAAK!

UNLIKE MY SURVEILLANCE, MY ACUTE
FIGHTING SKILLS AT THAT POINT WERE
UNPARALLELED--ESPECIALLY TO THE
PROFESSIONALLY UNTRAINED--IN
OTHER WORDS--SECURITY GUARDS.









YOU MURDERED YOUR EMPLOYER—WHO EVERY EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT SWEARS AN OATH TO UNTIL DEATH—AND YOU SPEAK TO ME ABOUT A HIGHER PURPOSE?



YOU ASSISTANTS AND YOUR MASTERS. WHAT IS IT WITH YOU ALL? IT IS LIKE YOU ARE NAÏVE TO THE TRUTH ALL AROUND YOU.

I SPEAK OF A HIGHER PURPOSE BEYOND MERE MATTERS OF COMMERCE, OR WEALTH. YOU AND I...



...WE COULD CHANGE THE WORLD.

AND I AM THE NAÏVE ONE?



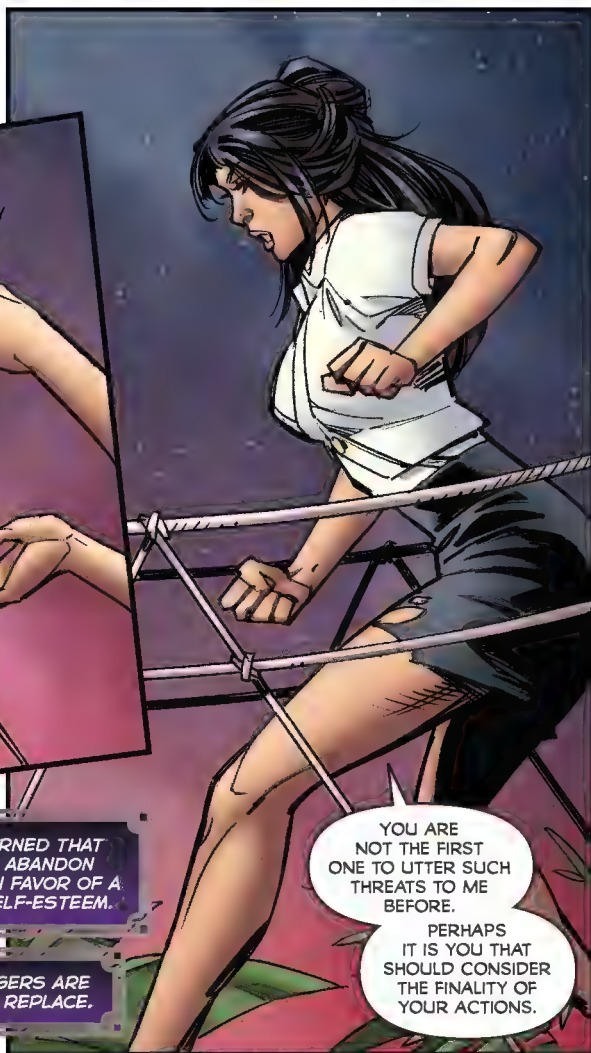
THIS IS WHY I SAID DON'T FOLLOW. YOU ARE INDEED A SPIRITED WARRIOR AND FAITHFUL SERVANT, BUT THE SAME CANNOT BE SAID OF YOUR MASTERS.

AND, I WILL NOT BE SWAYED IN MY MISSION. YOU MAY NEED THOSE WEAPONS, BUT I DO NOT.

THIS WILL NOT END WELL FOR YOU.

IN HINDSIGHT, I LEARNED THAT ONE SHOULD NEVER ABANDON THEIR ADVANTAGE IN FAVOR OF A BOOST TO ONE'S SELF-ESTEEM.

ALSO, GOLD DAGGERS ARE QUITE COSTLY TO REPLACE.



YOU ARE NOT THE FIRST ONE TO UTTER SUCH THREATS TO ME BEFORE.

PERHAPS IT IS YOU THAT SHOULD CONSIDER THE FINALITY OF YOUR ACTIONS.

IN TRUTH, HER OMINOUS
WARNING GAVE ME PAUSE.

AND, HER FIGHTING SKILLS
WERE UNPARALLELED.

YOU DO
NOT WANT THIS
FIGHT, IRIS—LET
IT GO.





NNNGH. I HAVE TO--

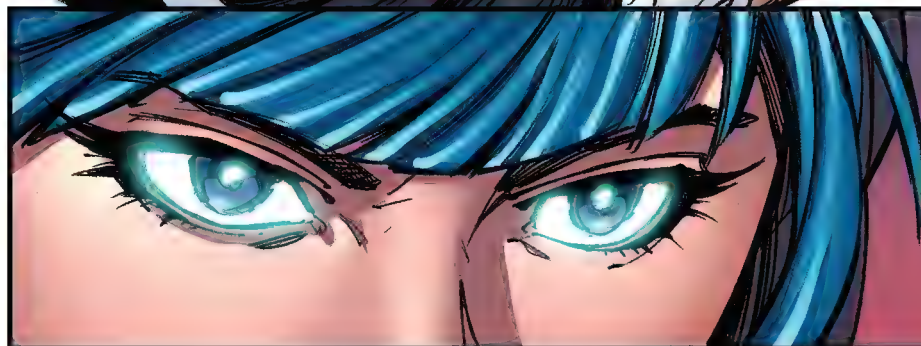
--YOU HAVE TO WHAT? PLEASE YOUR MASTER?

STOP--



--CALLING HIM THAT!

WHAT--?!



I AM SORRY. I TRIED TO WARN YOU, BUT YOU WILL LEARN SOON ENOUGH...



...YOU
ALL WILL.



YOU ARE YOUNG,
AND FAILURE WILL HELP
YOU GROW. LEARN TO
ACCEPT IT AND YOU
WILL THRIVE.

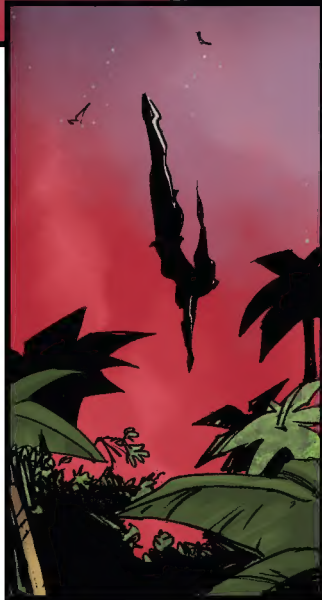
ONE DAY YOU WILL
DISCOVER WHAT I MEANT
BY A HIGHER PURPOSE.
YOU WILL BE NEEDED FOR A
GREATER CALLING...SO TAKE
CARE OF YOURSELF, IRIS.



THALIA!!!



OH, WHAT
THE HELL. IF
SHE CAN--

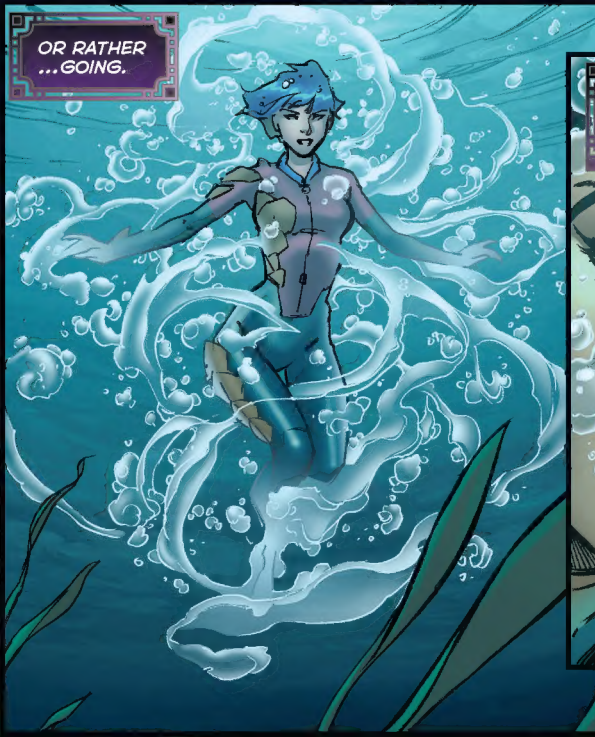


I EXPECTED MY SUDDEN
DEATH, BUT NOT THE WATER.

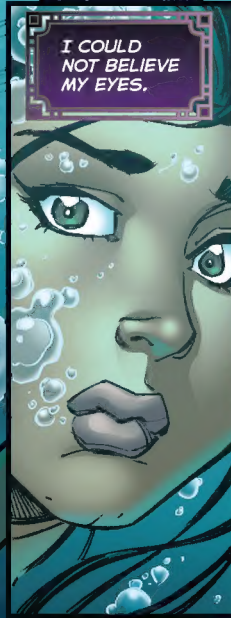
SPLSSHHHHH!



YET, WHAT I SAW
NEXT I TRULY DID
NOT SEE COMING...



OR RATHER
...GOING.



I COULD
NOT BELIEVE
MY EYES.



SHE WAS
GONE.



AT THE TIME I HAD A
HARD TIME BELIEVING
WHAT I WAS SEEING,
HOWEVER NOW I KNOW
SHE WAS ONE OF THEM...

...SHE
WAS A
BLUE...

...AND SHE WAS
THE ONE THAT GOT
AWAY...FOR NOW.

END

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT Iris

enemies among us

CASE FILES:

OBEDIENT. EFFICIENT. DEADLY—YET, THESE TRAITS ARE NOT INHERENT IN AN EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT UPON GRADUATION. THEY ARE CULTIVATED BY EXPERIENCE, ACTION—AND BLOOD. THESE TALES REPRESENT THE EARLY CHALLENGES EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IRIS FACED EARLY IN HER CAREER. HOWEVER, SHE IS NOT ALONE IN HER DEADLY EXPERIENCES. STAY TUNED FOR MORE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT CASE FILES TO COME...

part one

FIRST ASSIGNMENT

DAVID WOHL
- story -

GIUSEPPE CAFARO
- pencils & inks -

WES HARTMAN
- colors -

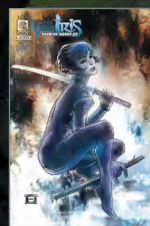
ZEN
- lettering -



Direct Edition
by Randy Green
& John Starr



Direct Edition
by Giuseppe Cafaro



Retailer Incentive Edition
by Talent Caldwell

part two

PAIN DROPS

VINCE HERNANDEZ
- story -

RANDY GREEN
- pencils -

MARK ROSLAN
- digital inks -

WES HARTMAN
- colors -

ZEN
- lettering -

Executive Assistant: Iris created by David Wohl, Brad Foxhaven & Michael Turner

Editors: FRANK MASTROMAURO, VINCE HERNANDEZ Assistant Editor: GABE CARRASCO

Design and Production: MARK ROSLAN, PETER STEIGERWALD

FOR ASPEN: Founder: MICHAEL TURNER Co-Owner: PETER STEIGERWALD Co-Owner/President: FRANK MASTROMAURO
Vice President/Editor in Chief: VINCE HERNANDEZ Vice President/Design and Production: MARK ROSLAN
Editorial Assistant: GABE CARRASCO Office Manager: MEGAN MADRIGAL AspenStore.com: CHRIS RUPP

ALL NEW EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT: IRIS™: Enemies Among Us Vol. 1 Issue 1

DECEMBER 2016. DIGITAL COPY. Published as a One-Shot by Aspen MLT, Inc., Office of Publication: 5855 Green Valley Circle, Suite. 111, Culver City, CA 90230. The Aspen MLT, Inc. logo® is a registered trademark of Aspen MLT, Inc. Executive Assistant: Iris™ and its logo, are the trademarks of Aspen MLT, Inc and Blockade Entertainment. The entire contents of this book, all artwork, characters and their likenesses are ©2016 Aspen MLT, Inc and Blockade Entertainment. All Rights Reserved. Any similarities between names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with persons living or dead or institutions is unintended and is purely coincidental. With the exception of artwork used for review purposes, none of the contents of this book may be reprinted, reproduced or transmitted by any means or in any form without the express written consent of Aspen MLT, Inc and Blockade Entertainment.

VISIT US ON THE WEB AT
www.aspencomics.com
FOR THE COMICS RETAILER NEAREST YOU CALL: 1-888-COMIC-BOOK

FIND US ON FACEBOOK AT
FACEBOOK.COM/ASPENCOMICS

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER AT
TWITTER.COM/ASPENCOMICS

FOR MORE ASPEN COMICS GO TO
WWW.ASPENSTORE.COM
INTERNATIONAL RIGHTS REPRESENTATIVE: CHRISTINE MEYER [CHRISTINE@CFLOYSTUDIO.COM]



GET
YOUR
ASPEN
COMICS...

...ON
THE GO!

COMIXOLOGY™

Digital Comics: Buy Once, Read Anywhere

Available Now for Download:

Aspen Splash • Broken Pieces • BubbleGun • Critter • Charismatic • Damsels in Excess • Dead Man's Run • Dellec • Eternal Soulfire
Executive Assistant: Assassins • All New Executive Assistant: Iris • All New Fathom • Fathom Blue • Fathom: Kiani • The Four Points
Homecoming • Idolized • Jirni • Legend of the Shadow Clan • The Legend of Oz: The Wicked West • Lola XOXO • Mindfield • Overtaken • Psycho Bonkers
Santeria: The Goddess Kiss • The Scourge • Shahrazad • Shrugged • All New Soulfire • Trish Out Of Water • The ZooHunters • Sketchbooks • Collected Editions & More!

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT US ON THE INTERNET AT WWW.ASPENCOMICS.COM

™ & © 2016 Aspen MLT, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All other trademarks, logos and copyrights are property of their respective owners.